NATIONAL LEAFLET.

The Relation of Temperance Reform to the Labor Movement.

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(*Johns Hopkins University.*)

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Hon. A. J. Streeter, prominent in the ranks of organized farmers and workingmen, has recently written a letter in favor of an alliance between the advocates of temperance reform and the advocates of labor reform. This letter is a plain manifestation of a growth which has been taking place for several years.

Labor organizations and their leaders have evidently been more and more impressed with the fact that intemperance is one of the deadliest foes of the workingmen of this country, and their sentiment in favor of temperance reform has been becoming constantly more intense. Evidences of this abound, and may be found in labor platforms, in reports of meetings of workingmen, and in the labor press. It is scarcely too much to say that the labor organizations of the country are, at least, temperance organizations, and many of their members and leaders are outspoken total abstainers and prohibitionists. Every one knows that this is the case with that much-misunderstood and more maligned organization, the Knights of Labor. Very im-

pressive must have been the public pledge of total abstinence given to Mr. Powderly at the Richmond convention a few years since, by all the members of the executive board. A little later I attended a fair of the Knights of Labor in Baltimore and found on sale no beverage stronger than lemonade.

On the other hand, it is equally natural that the leaders of the great temperance movement should be thoroughly in sympathy with all just aspirations of the toiling men and women of the world. What else but broad humanitarian views could have led these noble men and women to dedicate their lives to the cause of temperance? Many of them regarded the temperance movement as chiefly a labor movement. The evil of intemperance attracted their attention above all others, because it seemed to them the greatest curse of the age.

If the labor movement has broadened in the direction of temperance, it is equally certain that the current of temperance reform is broadening out and taking in a considerable portion of what is called labor reform. The various platforms of the temperance party, framed by state and national conventions, make this plain, and efforts to eliminate parts of the platform dealing with other aspects of labor reform than temperance have been happily voted down.

Any one who will read the testimony of Miss Frances E. Willard, President of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and of her excellent lieutenants, before the United States Senate Committee on Education and Labor, will be convinced that the scope of the work of that

organization is anything but narrow. The testimony was taken in New York in October, 1883, and was published in 1885, by the Government Printing Office, as Volume II. of the Testimony taken by the Committee. Recognizing that prevention is always better than cure, heredity and hygiene receive special attention, and each has a department in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union assigned it. Scientific temperance instruction has become general over the entire length and breadth of the land within a few years, and it is due to these earnest workers. Cooking is also considered in its relations to intemperance. I find this sentence in Miss Willard's testimony: "We think that if the people were taught to prepare food in a simple, hygienic manner, it would greatly redound to their benefit in establishing simple, unartificial habits." This confirms the utterance of a distinguished American physiologist that insufficient variety of food and poorly cooked food tend to intemperance by producing an unnatural craving for strong drink. A "Flower Mission," for taking flowers to the sick is mentioned as another department of work. Military drill among boys has also been introduced as a good feature of temperance reform. But it is not easy to enumerate all the ramifications of this temperance work. It is seen clearly by women like Miss Willard that whatever builds up the home, fosters patriotism, and stimulates love for our fellowmen, must diminish intemperance. The temperance movement is not a single movement. As I take it, the word temperance indicates a center of great

social activity. The temperance movement is a deep, wide movement of social reform which centers in temperance, but from that center spreads out in ever more and more inclusive circles until it touches the entire life of society.

It is well, then, in view of these circumstances, to look at the temperance movement from the standpoint of the workingman, and to consider the labor movement from the standpoint of the temperance reformer. If the two can not be coalesced, it is at least desirable that they should proceed in parallel lines.

I. Let us reflect for a moment on the loss occasioned to the workingmen of the United States by the use of intoxicating drinks. The direct loss has been often described and its amount can be readily learned by a perusal of easily accessible tracts and pamphlets. The importance of a few cents a day is however not sufficiently appreciated by people in moderate circumstances, and still less is it by wage-earners. A street-car line in Baltimore charges five cents for a single fare, but sells six tickets for twenty-five cents. It may be put this way: if you invest twenty-five cents, you receive one extra ticket, good for a five-cent ride; that is, you make twenty per cent on your investment, which is equal to four or five years' interest on the money. Yet I have ridden on a car of this line when out of ten persons, I was the only one to put a ticket into the box. In Washington, where all lines are compelled by law to sell six tickets for twenty-five cents, one may any day witness similar evidences of thriftlessness. You may even see a man pay fifteen cents in fares

for three persons, treating two others, while by investing ten cents additional he could get six tickets.

This illustration shows widespread and very general lack of thrift. The expenditure of money for intoxicating beverages is by far worse, for it is a loss not of twenty per cent, but of one hundred per cent. Five cents or ten cents a day seems like a small sum, but it is easy to show that after the expiration of a number of years it becomes a very considerable sum, sufficient, in most parts of the country, let us say, to pay for a comfortable home for an artisan in twenty years. But the direct loss is only a part, only the smallest part of the whole loss. The habit of thriftlessness grows, and it becomes ruinous to one's financial prospects, condemning one to a life of poverty. Waste for alcoholic beverages means generally waste for other injurious or useless indulgences.

The sum of money which a workingman who is a moderate drinker, or only an occasional drinker, can save in a few years by the practice of total abstinence, may not seem large, and let us confess frankly that it is small, and, as the rate of interest falls, becomes smaller; but it is a mistake to undervalue the utility of a small sum of ready money, for at a critical period it will often prove to be the difference between a life of comfort, usefulness, health, contentment, and a life of discouragement and poverty. Even so small a sum as fifty dollars may be the turning-point, and a deposit of ten dollars in a savings bank will spare one many a humiliation.

These are homely, old-fashioned arguments, but they can not be repeated too often. They are unfortunately apt to arouse irritation and ill-will on the part of workingmen because they are frequently put forward as the only thing which needs to be said on the subject of poverty. They are too often made a pretext on the part of the well-to-do, for their failure to concern themselves with the labor problem. It is very comfortable to the self-complacency of a plutocrat, as he sips his champagne, to say, "If the workingmen would stop drinking and save their money, they would never lack in this land of plenty. Intemperance is the cause of poverty and the only anti-poverty society needed is a society of one—each man for himself." Because this is so unjust and because its injustice is so keenly felt, the large grain of truth in it is too apt to be overlooked. It is this sort of talk more than anything else which has closed the ears of too many thinking workingmen to valid temperance argument.

The time lost on account of intemperance, and the strength of body wasted, have frequently been mentioned. Professor Huxley, the naturalist, has told us what kind of a body—broad shoulders and deep chest — he would wish for his son. He lays stress on physical strength, because in this age of sharp competition the turning-point of a life may be included within a few months, weeks or days, and during this time final success may depend on power to sustain continuous exertion of the most intense kind. It is frequently necessary, to enable one to take the tide of fortune at its

flood, to undergo arduous toil for a period of even years. Doubtless life is too intense and competition is too sharp, but the struggle for life must always be severe, and there is no prospect of improvement in a near future. He who burdens himself with habits which waste even a little time and dissipate even a little physical energy, enters the race handicapped; a loss of energy of which the loser may not even be conscious, has undoubtedly turned the scale of fortune against many a man.

The loss of mental energy is far more serious, on the whole, than the loss of physical strength, and this greater loss is experienced by many who never become intoxicated and who regard themselves as moderate drinkers.

The wage-earning classes need every bit of mental capacity which they possess or can acquire, to enable them to attain well-being in the struggle of modern industrial life. The wage-earning classes, as classes, must act solidly together. The solidarity of their interest can be disputed by no fair-minded and competent observer. Now, if this is so, every wage-earner who wastes any of his resources of body or mind by the use of alcoholic drinks, is an enemy of his class. At what disadvantage in dealing with employers are sullen and incompetent men, with no reserve of accumulated earnings, as compared with bright, open and determined men! The talk about the equality of labor and capital in labor contracts is a farce, but why make the inequality needlessly great? Strikes occur too frequently, but that they are sometimes necessary, is generally conceded. Upright and in-

telligent men will be very careful about entering on a strike, but when once undertaken, they will make a good fight. What is the effect of intemperance and attendant lawlessness on strikes? It is needless to answer the question. Disorder is so manifestly injurious to strikers, that unscrupulous employers have been accused of sending emissaries among them to stir it up. Workingmen should remember Cromwell's praying soldiers and the terror they were to their finally vanquished enemies. I think that absolutely temperate strikers, fleeing all association with saloons, opening every meeting of any sort with prayer, and holding a prayer-meeting or some kind of religious service every day, would inspire an unscrupulous individual or corporate employer with a new terror.

A good point was made in the testimony given by Mr. Alphonso Crosby before the United States Senate Committee to which attention has already been called. He said that the wages of mechanics were set by drinking men, because drinking men were improvident, and, having no economic reserve, were obliged to take what they could get; they had nothing to fall back on. This is in keeping with what has been said about the solidarity of the interests of labor. Nothing is more disastrous to a man who has something to sell than to be obliged to force it on the market. A commodity under those circumstances will frequently not bring half-price. Now he who is obliged to force labor on the labor market, does a thing equally disastrous, and his conduct is injurious to every workingman.

Intemperance weakens the working people in another way. It is made a reproach to them, and the innocent suffer with the guilty. It serves their opponents as a very efficient weapon. With the ordinary non-partisan—the man neither employer nor employed, in the usual sense—what is the most telling argument against the present agitation for the eight-hour day? Undoubtedly this: "More leisure means more time and more money for the saloon." Doubtless this is untrue, but in a good cause we ought not tc give our enemies any handle to use against us.

A continual subject for discussion among workingmen is political action. It requires all the unimpaired power of the keenest intellects at their command, to decide what political course it is best to take, and when any course is taken, it demands the utmost of their patience and self-control.

We hear in political economy of "the seen and the unseen," the unseen meaning simply that which is not readily seen. Now I think it is manifest that the worst effects of intemperance, considered from the standpoint of the labor movement, belong to the unseen. Is it not evident that temperance workers are among the best friends of the wage-earners of this country, and that any labor leader who has not sufficient mental power to grasp this, is unfit for his position? and, finally, that any intemperate laborer is an enemy to his class?

II. Let us now look at the labor movement from the standpoint of a broad-minded temperance reformer.

We should, I think, first of all, fully grasp the fact that the excessive use of strong drink is not merely the work of the devil. Perhaps I do not make my meaning clear. What I want to say is this: Men do not indulge in the use of intoxicating beverages merely because they are moved by an evil influence, and, except in the case of confirmed drinkers, not because they care particularly for what they drink. I am inclined to think that only a lesser part of the strength of the saloon is due to the love for the liquor which it dispenses. We must go below surface phenomena, and inquire what gives the saloon its strength? for when we do so, we shall become convinced that mere negative work is not half enough. If we simply drive devils out, they will return, as we are told, in sevenfold strength. A power for good must be introduced to take the place of evil influences expelled. *The greater part of temperance reform must be positive work*, and a failure to perceive this is, I think, one cause of many setbacks in the past, while an increasing recognition of this principle is precisely one of the most hopeful features of the temperance movement of to-day.

One main cause of the strength of the saloon is that it furnishes to the masses a convenient and always easily accessible meeting place and waiting place, free from restraints, and it is the only institution of the kind in American cities. One needs but to observe what can be seen any day and night in our cities and to reflect seriously on its significance, to understand how far-reaching this proposition is.

Rich men have their social clubs, but these institutions are beyond the reach of the poor. Workingmen often wish to meet to talk over some proposed course of action, let us say, political. Where shall they meet? One place, and only one place, is always open, and that is the saloon. Many saloons keep large, pleasant rooms which can be engaged free of charge. What a temptation is this! Of course, the proprietor of the hall expects recompense, and every one who attends the meeting feels morally bound to drink at least two glasses of beer. The meetings which workingmen hold in these days are very frequent, and on the whole these frequent meetings are commendable, but it is a continual difficulty to find suitable meeting places.

What has been said is also a partial explanation of the strength of the saloon with the regular political parties. Many of the local headquarters are in saloons.

We have as yet taken but one step in ascertaining the causes of the strength of the saloon. A Baltimore cooper talked somewhat like this to a friend of mine: "What shall I do with my boys? I live in a small house, very hot in summer. I have eight children, one of them a crying, fretful infant, and when my boys come home after a hard day's work, they need recreation. They eat their supper and go on the streets and doubtless into the saloons, but I can not say them nay. They are young fellows and must have some enjoyment and there is nothing for them at home." My friend suggested the Y. M. C. A., but he shook his head.

It was far away, and besides, he did not feel that his boys would be welcome. It was, moreover, expensive for a cooper's sons.

Take the street-cars drivers of Baltimore. They work twelve hours and more a day, formerly, indeed, seventeen. The highest pay is $2 a day. When one of them in winter has a free evening how shall he pass it? Quite likely he has no friends with homes in the city, and to expect him to remain in his cold, cheerless attic is unreasonable. He wanders out on the street, he strolls about, he has nothing better to do. On every corner he sees a saloon, and how warm it looks! How attractive the bright colors! How enticing the display of beautiful glass! He hears cheerful laughter and merry voices, and if he enters, he is thoroughly welcome. The price of admission is five cents. Is it any wonder that he goes in?

Men more favorably situated feel this temptation, as many who have been students away from home know full well. I remember meeting a Canadian student who had studied medicine in London. He said that on Sundays the only thing to do, if you did not want to pass the entire day in church, was to go to some place of temptation, for all the places of innocent recreation and amusement were closed. Many young men could tell the same tale. The devil has full swing on Sunday in great cities, for the churches make only a feeble competition for a few hours, and then are closed up.

Take also the case of men out of work, and remember that men in factories are idle about one-tenth of the year, and often for a longer

period. What are they to do during these recurring periods of idleness?

Walking by a saloon, you may see a notice to the effect that base-ball scores are exhibited inside, and so they are always active to provide all those things and all those conveniences which men desire, and their pay is in liquor purchased, liquor with which those who drink would frequently as soon dispense as not.

If what is written is true it will show many defects in our "holly-tree" inns and temperance restaurants. It seems to be supposed that what is drunk and what is eaten is the only reason why men frequent saloons, whereas it is only one reason, and probably in a very large majority of cases only a subordinate reason. Such an inn was once started in Baltimore, but did not succeed. An intelligent workingman told me that in the first place it was inconveniently situated on Charles street, far away from the workingmen's quarters, and that in the second place it was attended by ladies, as he said, dressed "in the tip of the fashion." He felt very uneasy, and after drinking his cup of coffee, left, never to return.

We have already advanced far enough to consider a few remedies. In one way or another, earnest attempts should be made to provide for the public convenient meeting places free from the temptations of the saloons. The holly-tree inns are a move in the right direction, but they should offer all the attractions of a saloon without the intoxicating beverages. I do not think they should be kept by ladies, but by men who have been successful as pro-

prietors and managers of liquor saloons. When such a man, as occasionally happens, feels the degradation and wrong of his occupation, and is willing to make a change, this at once furnishes him with occupation, perhaps not so profitable, but at least sufficient to support him. All kinds of non-intoxicating beverages and good lunches should be provided at the lowest possible price; also tables and newspapers, giving men as good an opportunity to pass unoccupied time as the saloon, also rooms and halls for lodges, trades unions, political clubs and the like. There can, in my mind, be no doubt that such places would sooner or later be remunerative, although it might be necessary to lose a good deal of money at the start.

Some of the English cities seem to have provided public halls for meetings of citizens, and their experience is worthy of examination.

Some of our trades unions and other labor organizations have done something to meet the want described, and they ought to receive more encouragement in efforts of this kind. A few winters since, I found two rather cheerless rooms in an upper story of a large building in Cleveland, as I was searching for an office. The rooms contained a few papers, checkerboards, packs of cards, etc. I asked a plainly dressed, but intelligent and honest looking man, by whom the rooms were occupied, and was told by the Bricklayers' Union. He said that when "the boys" were out of work it furnished them with a lounging place and kept them out of the saloons.

The bricklayers of Philadelphia have a large,

new hall, and when I visited it I found a store on the first floor vacant. It had not then been rented. The managers had received an offer of high rent for it from a man who wanted to open a saloon, but it had been decided that under no circumstances would it be let for such a purpose, much as they might want the money. I noticed that the book-shelves were empty, and here was an opportunity for temperance workers and philanthropists to encourage a good beginning by providing literature of a high order to reduce still further the attractions of the saloon.

The Labor Lyceum of Myrtle street, Brooklyn, furnishes a meeting place for workingmen, and rooms for many of their organizations. A benevolent physician has been active in aiding in its construction. It was desired to prohibit altogether the sale of intoxicating liquors in the building, but unfortunately it was difficult to pay for it, and reluctantly the right to sell beer was given to a man who pays to the Lyceum a certain sum for every keg sold.

Now, what temperance workers ought to do, it seems to me, is to take hold of good features of the labor movement and assist in their development. Here, as elsewhere, what is wanted is to help people to help themselves. It is a mistake to try to force things on people. What is wanted is to take hold of institutions spontaneously arising among the masses, and to help to give them a sound development.

Churches should do more; think of saloons open one hundred hours a week and churches open, say, six hours! The churches, if open at

all times, would furnish meeting places, and if they kept people from evil I believe God would be pleased.

Workingmen's employers would often find it profitable to assist in this work. I visited the Hocking Valley in 1886. It is a mining region in Ohio, and was the scene of long-continued and more or less violent strikes a few years ago, as will be generally remembered. In New Straitsville, I was struck by the utter cheerlessness and desolateness of the lives of people condemned to live in such a frightful place. I went in the evening to an entertainment given by a troupe of very indifferent minstrels. The charge was ten cents, and as I came out a lot of boys eagerly asked for my ticket. The look on the faces of the men and boys was to me pathetic. They were famishing for some rational, health-giving amusement. Their employers had spent several hundred thousand dollars, and done their business a damage, some say, of over a million, to gain a victory "in wind," as a prominent member of the syndicate said. The syndicate was determined to crush the miners' organization, but when I was in the place I think there was not even one miner who was a non-union man. I thought how much better it would have been for the syndicate to expend, say, one hundred thousand dollars, in the construction of a library and hall and to give the men opportunities for a more wholesome life. It would have been appreciated, and would probably have saved all that was lost in fruitless strife.

Child-labor is a potent cause of intemperance,

and here temperance reform and the labor movement should proceed unitedly. It is an evil which is rapidly growing, especially in the West. Children fall into bad ways and are lost while yet too young to be fully responsible.

Tenement-house reform is another work which is essential to temperance reform. It is impossible to expel King Alcohol from the slums of cities like New York and Chicago so long as these slums exist. Negative work here will never accomplish the end desired. The slums are breathing holes of hell, and should be swept from the earth, and if Christian people would go earnestly to work and stop listening to the devil as he preaches *laissez faire*, let alone, non-interference, they could be swept from the earth.

Bad ventilation of mines and workshops weakens the constitution and paves the way for beer and whisky. Let every temperance advocate support the workingmen in their effort to improve the condition of mines and workshops. Measures like these are not something which temperance people may feel free to support or not to support as they see fit. They are a real essential part of the temperance movement.

Playgrounds for children are needed. No American city has done its duty in this respect, and we are lagging far behind European cities. I notice how eagerly any open spot near my house is seized by boys and girls. They are hungry for innocent play, and much mischief comes from lack of opportunity. It is mere overflow of animal spirits which can find no harmless channel into which to flow. The ex-

perience of Cornell University is instructive. Ex-President White told me that after military drill had been introduced, a gymnasium erected and opportunities for physical exercise of an innocent kind had been provided, difficulties of discipline almost disappeared. Disorder and lawlessness stopped almost spontaneously. I believe many a "city tough" might have grown into a useful citizen had municipal playgrounds and gymnasiums been provided for him while a child.

Overwork is a cause of intemperance, especially in over-heated and poorly-ventilated factories, and it has generally been observed by those who have made a study of the matter, that a reduction in the hours of labor is followed by a diminution of intemperance, perhaps not at first, but in a near future. This is, I think, the very general testimony of experts in this matter, and is the result shown by every careful investigation. I will quote a few words on this subject from Robert Howard of Massachusetts, secretary of the spinners' organization, and a very intelligent and competent witness. In speaking of the girls in Fall River mills, he says :

"It is dreadful to see those girls, stripped almost to the skin, wearing only a kind of loose wrapper, and running like a race horse from the beginning to the end of the day ; and I can perceive that it is bringing about both a moral and physical decay in them. * * * I must say that I have noticed that the hard, slavish overwork is driving those girls into the saloons after they leave the mills in the evening ; and you might as well deprive them of their suppers ; after

they leave the mills you will see them going into saloons, looking scared and ashamed, and trying to go in without any one seeing them—good, respectable girls, too; but they come out so tired, and so thirsty, and so exhausted, especially in the summer months, from working along steadily from hour to hour, and breathing the noxious effluvia from the grease and other ingredients that are used in the mills, and they are so exhausted when the time comes to quit, that you will find that all their thoughts are concentrated on something to drink to allay their thirst." Of course, men are still more exposed to this temptation, and much more testimony could be given.

Here, again, we ought to unite positive with negative work, and those interested in the temperance movement ought to help workingmen to reduce to reasonable limits the length of the working day in factories and shops, and then to encourage them to make a good use of leisure. The seventh Earl of Shaftesbury—whose life, by Hodder, should be read by every philanthropist—was in this as in so many other respects, a model reformer. He assisted the short-time committees very efficiently in securing suitable legislation, and when the working day was reduced in accordance with their program, he wrote them a letter from which the following is an extract: "My good friends, * * * First, we must give most humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God for the unexpected and wonderful success that has attended our efforts * * * But with your success have commenced new duties. You are now in pos-

fession of those two hours which you have so long and so ardently desired; you must therefore turn them to the best account, to that account which was ever in the minds of your friends and advocates when they appealed to the legislature on behalf of your rights as immortal beings, as citizens and Christians.

"You will remember the principal motive that stimulated your own activity and the energetic aid of your supporters in Parliament, was the use that might be made of this leisure for the moral improvement of the factory people, and especially the female workers, who will now enjoy far better opportunities both of learning and practicing those duties which must be known and discharged if we would have a comfortable, decent and happy population.

"You will experience no difficulty throughout your several districts in obtaining counsel or assistance on these subjects. The clergy, the various ministers, the medical men—all who have been so forward and earnest in your cause—will, I am sure, be really delighted to cooperate with your efforts."

But one other point remains to be mentioned. The use of intoxicating beverages has been in a thousand and one ways connected with sociability. It has associations with joyous and festive occasions. Here, again, we must not be content with simple banishment. Those who have gifts as social leaders have opportunity to do useful work. They should give their earnest, serious thought to the development of new social forms and customs, quite as charming and delightful as the old, yet unconnected with bev-

erages which intoxicate. Always strive to put some good influence in the place of the evil habit banished, for until this is done the victory is only half won.

These are a few of the suggestions which occur to me in connection with those two large subjects, temperance reform and the labor movement, and, inadequate as this treatment is, I trust that it may stimulate thought and endeavor, and help forward the good work of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union.

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